

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-9. (cancelled)

10. (currently amended): A screw for use in an extruder comprising a cylinder for carrying a rubber material supplied from a hopper port at an ~~the rear~~ upstream end of the cylinder ~~of the extruder~~ by the screw, molding it into a predetermined sectional form and extruding it from a nozzle attached to ~~the~~ a downstream end of the cylinder, wherein

~~the~~ a height of a flight portion of the screw located below the hopper port ~~of the screw~~ is lower than ~~the~~ a height of a flight portion located on a downstream side and continuously changes in a peripheral direction at a predetermined angle with respect to an axial direction of the screw.

11. (currently amended): The screw according to claim 10, wherein a portion where the height of the flight portion is lower than the height of the flight portion on ~~the~~ a downstream side has an angle of 180° or less.

12. (currently amended): The screw according to claim 10, wherein ~~the~~ a number of threads on an upstream side of the screw is made smaller than ~~the~~ a number of threads on ~~a~~ the downstream side.

13. (currently amended): The screw for use in an extruder according to claim 10, wherein ~~the~~ an interval of the threads on an upstream side is made wider than ~~the~~ an interval of the threads on ~~a~~ the downstream side.

14. (currently amended): The screw for use in an extruder according to claim 10, wherein ~~the~~ diameters of the threads on an upstream side of the screw are made larger than ~~the~~ diameters of the threads on a downstream side.

15. (currently amended): The screw for use in an extruder according to claim 10, wherein the height of the flight portion located below the hopper port is ~~made between 2% to and~~ 6 % smaller than the diameter of the screw.

16. (withdrawn): A process for producing a screw for use in an extruder for carrying a rubber material supplied from a hopper port at the rear of the cylinder of the extruder by the screw, molding it into a predetermined sectional form and extruding it from a nozzle attached to the end of the cylinder, the process comprising cutting away a peripheral portion of a flight portion located below the hopper port of an existing screw at a predetermined angle so that the height of the flight portion continuously changes in a peripheral direction to produce a screw having the flight portion located below the hopper port lower than the height of the flight portion on a downstream side.

17. (withdrawn): The process for producing a screw for extruders according to claim 16, wherein the amount of the peripheral portion cut away is 2 to 6 % of the diameter of the screw.

18. (withdrawn): A process for producing a tire rubber member by using the screw according to claim 10.

19. (withdrawn): A tire rubber member manufactured by using the screw according to claim 10 and having a gauge fluctuation of 0.15 mm or less.

20. (new): The screw according to claim 10, wherein the cylinder has a consistent inner diameter from the hopper port to a last thread of the screw at the downstream end.